



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/698,441	10/30/2000	Hiroshi Kishi	107427	6528

25944 7590 04/03/2007  
OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC  
P.O. BOX 19928  
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320

EXAMINER
----------

ABDULSELAM, ABBAS I

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2629

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	04/03/2007	PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/698,441

Applicant(s)

KISHI ET AL.

Examiner

Abbas I. Abdulsalam

Art Unit

2629

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11/29/06.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 4-14, 16-17 and 19-20 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 15 and 18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### DETAILED ACTION

1. This office action is in response to a communication filed on 11/29/06. Claims 1-20 are pending.

#### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-3, 15 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wataru et al. (Japanese Publication # 11-198745) in view of Yoshio Matsuoka (Japanese Publication # 10-221424).

Regarding claim 1, Wataru et al. (hereinafter = Wataru) teaches a control apparatus for input screens that is installed in a vehicle (page 1, first paragraph under "DETAILED DESCRIPTION") and constructed to input predetermined operation performed by an operator based on information displayed by display device as an operator guidance and change information to be displayed by the display device upon input of the operator guidance (page 2, fourth & fifth paragraphs under "DETAILED DESCRIPTION", display screen (2a), control unit (2)), comprising: operation nullification device that prohibits the predetermined operation performed by the operator from being inputted as the operator guidance upon fulfillment of a predetermined traveling condition related to operation of the vehicle to prevent unsafe operation

Art Unit: 2629

while the vehicle is traveling (see the abstract, where input operation by the driver is inhibited depending on a signal from car speed sensor (10)); and operation nullification canceller (Fig. 1 (2) Fig. 7(12, 13)) that cancels prohibition against the inputting of the predetermined operation performed by the operator as the operator guidance (see the abstract where inhibition of the input operation is released, also see switches (12, 13)) if a predetermined time period has elapsed since the prohibition against the inputting of the predetermined operation performed by the operator as the operator guidance (page 4 first paragraph under "DETAILED DESCRIPTION starting from lines 5, discharge of transit compulsion with respect to predetermined period of time).

However, Wataru's release switches (12, 13) are not automatic and the predetermined time mentioned is not the time elapsed right before the release of the switches (12, 13).

Yoshio on the other hand teaches that at a specified time, part of a display is automatically switched to a display, which displays other information (see the abstract).

Note that the duration on which the display is switched can be preset.

Hence, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Wataru's release switches (12, 13) along with a display screen (2a) inside a vehicle with Yoshio's automatic switch of the display for a preset period of time, because the use of automatic switching of a display for a preset period of time helps provide important information while a car is running as taught by Yoshio (see the abstract).

Art Unit: 2629

Regarding claim 2, Wataru teaches the operation nullification device is constructed to judge whether or not the predetermined traveling condition has been fulfilled, depending on information displayed by the display device (page 3 third & fourth paragraphs under “DETAILED DESCRIPTION”, Main ECU 3 in steps 101-104).

Regarding claim 3, Wataru teaches first operation device for performing the predetermined operation based on a first action made by the operator; and second operation device for performing the predetermined operation based on a second action made by the operator, the second action being different from the first action, wherein: the operation nullification device that judges whether or not the predetermined traveling condition has been fulfilled, depending on whether the predetermined operation is performed by the first operation device or by the second operation device (Page 4 first paragraph under starting lines 15 under “DETAILED DESCRIPTION”).

Regarding claim 15, Wataru teaches a control apparatus for input screens that is installed in a vehicle (page 1, first paragraph under “DETAILED DESCRIPTION”) and constructed to input predetermined operation performed by an operator based on information displayed by display device as an operator guidance and change information to be displayed by the display device upon input of the operator guidance (page 2, fourth & fifth paragraphs under “DETAILED DESCRIPTION”, display screen (2a), control unit (2)), comprising: operation nullification means for prohibiting the predetermined operation performed by the operator from

Art Unit: 2629

being inputted as the operator guidance upon fulfillment of a predetermined traveling condition related to operation of the vehicle to prevent unsafe operation while the vehicle is traveling (see the abstract, where input operation by the driver is inhibited depending on a signal from car speed sensor (10)); and operation nullification cancel means for canceling prohibition against the inputting of the predetermined operation performed by the operator as the operator guidance (see the abstract where inhibition of the input operation is released, also see switches (12, 13)) if a predetermined time period has elapsed since the prohibition against the inputting of the predetermined operation performed by the operator as the operator guidance (page 4 first paragraph under “DETAILED DESCRIPTION starting from lines 5, discharge of transit compulsion with respect to predetermined period of time).

However, Wataru's release switches (12, 13) are not automatic and the predetermined time mentioned is not the time elapsed right before the release of the switches (12, 13).

Yoshio on the other hand teaches that at a specified time, part of a display is automatically switched to a display, which displays other information (see the abstract).

Note that the duration on which the display is switched can be preset.

Hence, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Wataru's release switches (12, 13) along with a display screen (2a) inside a vehicle with Yoshio's automatic switch of the display for a preset period of time, because the use of automatic switching of a display for a preset period of time helps provide important information while a car is running as taught by Yoshio (see the abstract).

Regarding claim 18, Wataru teaches a control method for input screens that is installed in a vehicle (page 1, first paragraph under “DETAILED DESCRIPTION”) and constructed to input predetermined operation performed by an operator based on information displayed by display device as an operator guidance and change information to be displayed by the display device upon input of the operator guidance (page 2, fourth & fifth paragraphs under “DETAILED DESCRIPTION”, display screen (2a), control unit (2)), comprising the steps of prohibiting the predetermined operation performed by the operator from being inputted as the operator guidance upon fulfillment of a predetermined traveling condition related to operation of the vehicle to prevent unsafe operation while the vehicle is traveling (see the abstract, where input operation by the driver is inhibited depending on a signal from car speed sensor (10)); and canceling prohibition(Fig. 1 (2) Fig. 7(12, 13)) against the inputting of the predetermined operation performed by the operator as the operator guidance(see the abstract where inhibition of the input operation is released, also see switches (12, 13)) if a predetermined time period has elapsed since the prohibition against the inputting of the predetermined operation performed by the operator as the operator guidance(page 4 first paragraph under “DETAILED DESCRIPTION starting from lines 5, discharge of transit compulsion with respect to predetermined period of time).

However, Wataru’s release switches (12, 13) are not automatic and the predetermined time mentioned is not the time elapsed right before the release of the switches (12, 13).

Yoshio on the other hand teaches that at a specified time, part of a display is automatically switched to a display, which displays other information (see the abstract).

Art Unit: 2629

Note that the duration on which the display is switched can be preset.

Hence, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Wataru's release switches (12, 13) along with a display screen (2a) inside a vehicle with Yoshio's automatic switch of the display for a preset period of time, because the use of automatic switching of a display for a preset period of time helps provide important information while a car is running as taught by Yoshio (see the abstract).

***Allowable Subject Matter***

4. Claims 4-7, 8-14, 16-17 and 19-20 are allowed.

***Conclusion***

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The following art is cited for further reference.

U.S. Pat. No. to Yamamoto et al. (USPN 6411894)

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Abbas I Abdulsalam whose telephone number is (571) 272-7685. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 9:00 A.M. to 5:30 P.M.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard Hjerpe can be reached on (571) 272-7691. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.



Art Unit: 2629

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Abbas abdulsalam

Examiner

Art unit 2629

March 30, 2007

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Abbas Abdulsalam", written in a cursive style.